

THE NEW GERMANY AND HER REMAINING JEWS

A Reporter's Notebook

HAL LEHRMAN

DÜSSELDORF (late August): Fists still swing freely in Germany. My first election rally of the current campaign, in a suburb. The speaker was former Panzer General Hasso von Manteufel, for the FDP, one of the three parties in Chancellor Adenauer's coalition. His appeal is nationalist, addressed to "my old battle comrades." A few years back, when Manteufel was last billed here, the young Communist Blueshirts howled him down and invaded the platform. This time everybody expected trouble again. You could pick the Communists out. They came in groups of two and three, in caps and leather jackets, and sat down all over the hall.

The meeting started with a half-hour film on the East Berlin uprising: workers stamping on the Red Flag, firing bad eggs at Soviet tanks, and doing the other brave things that thrilled the free world. The mood was just right when the FDP district leader stood up to introduce the General and began denouncing all Reds everywhere. The Communists in the house should have stayed quiet until they could let loose at Manteufel, or else they should have

performed by cue and heckled in unison. Instead, they emitted individual, disorganized shouts at the local speaker. The FDP counter-offensive clicked beautifully. At the first disturbance a squad, five men strong, would proceed down an aisle in the direction of the noise. The second roar enabled them to spot and pinpoint their man. At the third outbreak, two of them would squeeze through in the row behind, grab the man under each arm, and haul him into the clear. There, two more would grab hold of him, and then the four would drag him out of the theater, a fifth "usher" running alongside and methodically punching him in the face. This happened half a dozen times. After that, quiet, except for the sporadic but voluntary departure of more Communists. "Das ist ein Neger-Mord," muttered a leather-jacket in front of me as he got up to go. Manteufel made an oration interrupted only by applause.

I left before he finished. The lobby was packed with police, who had watched without interfering. Outside, a few Communists, identifiable by bloodied noses and cut lips, lingered across the street. The Düsseldorf police chief, wearing civilian clothes, sat in his sleek Mercedes a block away, his deputy chief at the wheel. A German reporter introduced me. Just for the needle, I asked him about freedom of speech. He looked out at me archly and shrugged: "The General also has a right to speak, *nein?*"

HAL LEHRMAN first began to write for this magazine in 1946, while he was traveling through the satellite countries of Eastern Europe—in those days still accessible to an inquiring reporter. Since then he has written for us on Israel, on the Middle East, and on the fund-raising problems of American Jewry; he has published two books (*Russia's Europe* and *Israel: The Beginning and Tomorrow*); he has held a Guggenheim Fellowship; and he has achieved a reputation as one of the most perceptive and authoritative reporters in the country on the areas of his special competence—Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Israel. Mr. Lehrman is now in Israel, after having traveled through Germany and Austria. In this first installment of a series of reports we will publish from him, Mr. Lehrman deals with Germany just before and after the recent elections, focusing on the relations between the German authorities and the remaining Jews in Germany.

DRIVING down for a one-day visit in Cologne, I made first contact with two of the Jewish "problems" in postwar Germany. The other passenger in the Israel Purchasing Mission's car was an engineer—a technical expert selecting goods earmarked for Israel under Bonn's reparations treaty. German-born, he had left in 1932, returned five months ago.

How does it feel to be back as an Israeli official? "Comfortable enough, if you like living in a golden ghetto. We've built it. The Germans are polite, even friendly. But we keep away, except for official business. It's an

unwritten law we've made for ourselves, without discussion. Makes life a bit meager, but you wouldn't play pinochle with someone whose cousin may have put your cousin in a stove." Israeli nationality, he thinks, does get him special preferences. On three entries and exits, customs officers passed him through even ahead of Americans and British, with kowtows and not a suitcase opened. (They did the same for me—but perhaps he's right: I carried in full view my little blue and white overnight bag marked EL AL ISRAEL AIRLINES, in Hebrew letters.) Toward Germans in the mass, he feels contempt. "They've decided Hitler was right about the Jews' international influence. That's what destroyed him, they say. And they respect us as 'conquerors.' The blame is put on Hitler, for committing the stupidity of provoking us. And this is about all they blame him for."

The fifty-five-member Mission staff has its offices in a couple of one-story buildings in a compound on Ottostrasse belonging to Cologne's Jewish Community, the *Kultusgemeinde*. Across the lawn is the handsomely rebuilt Jewish Hospital, too big now for the community's 800 survivors. They rent it as a military hospital to the Belgians, who patrol a piece of this British Zone.

"Locating ourselves in Cologne has one advantage," said I. Z. as he showed me around the cramped quarters of the Mission. "It's the big city that is closest to Bonn, where the government is. This allows easy communication without making it seem that we have diplomatic relations. But Cologne was badly hit by bombs. Housing has been very difficult. . . . Though we opened shop in May, we spent over a month just in arranging procedures with the Germans. Actually, we've only ordered 40 million marks' worth of the 240 millions due us up to next April. Mostly it's been just raw and semi-processed materials like iron, steel, rayon, caustic soda. Checking on heavy capital goods is a slow process, but once cleared there will be real big orders."

Z. smiled when I told him about the engineer's "golden ghetto." He wouldn't swear that bachelors in the Mission at all times resisted "fraternization." Still, the part about social distance on the official level is true. "Until now it's been all business, and very correct behavior on our side. The Germans are more than cooperative; they've made concessions they might have withheld if they wanted to stick to the contract. We go to lunch occasionally, or

meet them in cafés, but only officially. No cocktail parties, and certainly no invitations to each other's homes. On their side, the hesitation is based on tact, and fear that we would rebuff them. But this won't go on forever. The ice is bound to melt. It's already begun melting in Israel. The first two German ships with reparations goods made port there this month. We were so afraid of demonstrations that the ships were rerouted from Haifa to Jaffa, where they might slip in with less notice. Word got around, of course—the police were on alert—but nothing happened, absolutely nothing."

The engineer was right about German awe of Jewish strength. "Last January, when the Kremlin began raving against the Moscow doctors, the Germans were delighted. Not because the Soviets had turned anti-Semitic, but because Stalin, like Hitler, was making the fatal error of attacking the omnipotent Jews. . . ."

KARL MARX [sic!], editor and publisher of Germany's most important Jewish newspaper, *Die Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in Deutschland*, is a chubby, lion-maned little man, with an attractive English-speaking wife and a comfortable home in Düsseldorf with well-stocked library and cellar. He got away to England during the troubles. Now he and his weekly have been fighting for restitution, indemnification, and a virile Jewish community in the new Germany. I observed that his paper is "of the Jews in Germany," not "of the German Jews." He said, "That's the way we feel. There is too much we remember."

But the Germans have not forgotten, either. Marx thinks they have learned their lesson and will stand firm against all kinds of extremism. "Over half of our 16,000 domestic subscribers are non-Jews. In the past eight years, despite my many sharp attacks, I've had only four poison-pen letters: two were from the same individual, who turned out to be crazy, and the other two were anonymous. But hundreds of cordial letters came in from Christians after Bonn decorated me for working to improve German-Jewish relations. Former Hitler Youth students at the university visit our archives for material to use in dissertations on Jewish subjects. There's a real cult of Israel. We showed that film, *Tent City*, to all the schools. Tremendous impression. I lectured on Israel in a church for forty-five minutes—and the question period lasted three hours more. Neo-Nazism hasn't a chance. Many Germans will

tell you that if Hitler had befriended the Jews he might have won the war." (There it was again!)

Marx takes a cheerful view of Jewry's future here. "Not everyone has settled down overseas, you know. Only yesterday there was a delegation of Tel Aviv lawyers investigating the feasibility of coming back. Jewish students are in German universities again. People keep drifting back—from Israel, from South Africa, from South America, yes, even some from the United States. The DP camps have almost disappeared, but the Jewish population in the cities has actually grown. The future community will have to be quite different from the old—proud and more vigilant as Jews. Contrary to what everyone thought in 1945, Hitler did not write the last chapter."

SOME Jews here may not agree with Marx on their community's bright prospects, but they do not see why world Jewry should go out of its way to dim them. Organized German Jewry is hopping mad over the distribution of proceeds from the settlements with the Germans on heirless Jewish property and other claims.

Hendrik G. van Dam, executive secretary of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, is the angriest of all, and doesn't mind being quoted. His chief abomination is the "Jewish Restitution Successor Organization." This outfit was created in 1948, with approval and support of the American military, to represent the major international Jewish organizations in disposal of pre-war community and private unclaimed or heirless Jewish property in the United States Zone. Normally, heirless property reverts to the state, but a government succeeding Hitler's regime obviously could not (and did not) have such pretensions. The JRSO was to arrange settlements, take court action when necessary, sell or otherwise dispose of titles, and serve as instrument for distribution of the ensuing funds.

According to van Dam, this was an iniquitous arrangement to begin with, and is even more evilly implemented. The JRSO, operating out of Nuremberg, reports to a board of directors in New York. "We have a couple of votes on the board, but they don't even give us the fare as far as New York so that we can have our say." He agrees that the money should be used for the common good of world Jewry, that much of it should go to Israel and other

places outside of Germany, and that the shrunken communities are hardly entitled to a major share of what the dead left behind. "But this property, after all, is *German Jewish*. The least we have a right to ask is a fair share to meet our present needs, and to be decently included in consultations on where the rest should go."

I said I understood that the JRSO had made cash grants and also given some revenue-earning property back to the various *Gemeinden*. "Yes, under pressure, a few communities agreed to accept JRSO settlements in the early period because they were afraid that otherwise they'd get nothing at all. But Frankfort, Nuremberg, Fürth, and Augsburg held out, and Augsburg has just won a decision against JRSO in two German courts. For all our old people, our sick people, our unemployed, the JRSO grants are hopelessly inadequate. The proof of it is that, although the Joint Distribution Committee gives additional help in some communities, we still have to go hat in hand to the German authorities.

"I don't blame the American authorities," van Dam went on. "They thought they were doing the right thing in a complicated situation. But I do blame the Jewish organizations—and most of all I blame the officials of JRSO. While we in the Central Council barely exist on a JRSO dole, they drive around in great limousines. And they treat us like colonials. The trouble with these men is that they still feel and act like liberators." So much for their side of the story—no doubt, the JRSO officials, when we see them, will have considerations to balance off this heated view.

BONN (end of August): The Number 2 man of the neo-Nazi Deutsche Reichspartei was given a very hard time when he faced a roomful of reporters today. Two days ago the Interior Ministry of North-Rhine Westphalia ruled that, according to law, Werner Naumann, protégé of the late Joseph Goebbels, was barred from candidacy on the DRP or any other ticket because he was a top-grade un-Naziified Nazi. This afternoon DRP deputy August von Thadden called a press conference in the Parliament building to protest this "undemocratic" act.

The non-German correspondents present didn't have to say a word. As soon as Thadden finished his cocky opening statement, the German reporters began firing a barrage of ques-

tions tending to prove him a liar and imbecile. Before long each question became a speech and the press conference a debate. Times have changed since the long night of Hitlerism descended on German journalism.

It might almost be said that reporters go too far when press conferences turn into brawls. Also, how brave is it, after all, to bully a small-fry opponent of the regime in power? At one point the unhappy Thadden blurted out that the hue and cry against ex-Nazis was raised only against persons who were *not* members of the three "respectable" government coalition parties. The reporters demanded to know just whom he meant, but he declined to name names.

PPRIVATE interview with Theodor Heuss, President of the West Germany Bundesrepublik. Tall, deep-voiced, white-haired, chain smoker of cigars, Foxy Grandpa type, obviously a kind and genial man—and rather oddly located in the same FDP which puts up people like Wehrmacht ex-generals for election.

The President did not think there was any danger of extremist reaction in the future Germany. "And if there is," he added brightly, "it won't hurt the Jews. There will be too few of them here, not enough to be made scapegoats. It would be impossible to shift the blame to them the way Hitler did. I keep urging my Jewish friends to return, not to leave Germany isolated.

"Believe me, the German people are ashamed. I have said it openly, and I say it again: I reject the theory of collective guilt but I affirm the fact of collective shame. Many of us, including myself, did not know about Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen until it was all over—but we should not, and we do not, act as if we did not know. We must never forget how monstrously many Germans conducted themselves in Germany's name."

I asked him about the Israel Mission in Cologne, which enjoys such semi-diplomatic privileges as couriers, a code, exemption from taxes, but abstains from accepting full diplomatic status.

"It depends on Israel," Heuss said. "We are ready to establish formal relations as soon as they wish it. But we understand how they feel, and we are not pressing. I was eager to receive Mr. Shinar, the Mission chief. He was reluctant at first, not knowing how his government would take it. Later he came, though

unofficially. Nahum Goldmann I have known for forty years, since he was a student and I a young journalist—and it was a great pleasure for me to have him visit me here. I look forward to attending the celebration in honor of Israel's Martin Buber soon in Frankfurt. The German publishers are giving him an award for his work in the cause of peace. He is a great and saintly man."

THE single thorniest issue in Jewish-German relations right now is what to do with the "illegals" from Israel. About 700 of them have made their way to Foehrenwald, the last of the DP camps, near Munich. Most of them got transit visas to neighboring countries, then crossed the German border. They're called "returnees," but they are not German Jews. The only element of "return" is that they may have started from a German camp when they originally left for Israel. Some were never in Germany at all. They are drawn here because more agencies and machinery for emigration are located in Germany than anywhere else in Europe. They've heard that wandering Jews can get cash support from these agencies and even from the German authorities, and maybe earn a little money on the side too.

Well, the Germans have been objecting. So have the Jewish organizations. The Germans, naturally, dislike paying out the customary refugee dole and harboring a growing number of people who, they say, have no right to be in the country.

From the official Jewish point of view, the whole idea of an exodus from Israel towards Germany is simply intolerable. The JDC at first refused to give any cash assistance, and lately the German police have begun arresting returnees. Three have been deported to Austria. In turn, the illegals last month invaded the JDC offices on Siebertstrasse in Munich and "occupied" the premises overnight, demanding cash and protection.

On August 9, representatives of the World Jewish Congress, the Israel Purchasing Mission, the JDC, and the German Foreign Office met in Geneva. They agreed on a proposal by Nahum Goldmann that anybody reaching Foehrenwald before August 17 should be unmolested and given support; that the Foehrenwald returnees be transferred to a former German army barracks in Munich known as the Funkkaserne; that maximum efforts be made during the next six months to dispose of

the group by emigration—and that all later returnees be treated with the full rigor of German law, the right of the authorities to do so being expressly recognized by the Jewish organizations. This last point has caused considerable uneasiness outside Germany, since it suggests the abdication of organized Jewry's right to intercede for any Jew anywhere at any time. Meanwhile the returnees have kept coming, despite an Israeli press campaign to discourage them.

THE whole problem was reviewed at a formal conference in the Parliament building under Foreign Office chairmanship. Looking very formal myself, I crashed the meeting just by taking a seat on the Jewish side of the large horseshoe table and earnestly commencing to doodle on a sheet of paper. Quite a scene, this parley of Germans and Jews. Everyone at the head of the table was German except Yachil, deputy chief of the Purchasing Mission (another example of Bonn's tendency to bestow diplomatic rank on the Israelis by inference). On the right side were state-government representatives from Bavaria, which pays 15 per cent of German costs for refugees. On the left sat van Dam, speaking for all German Jewry; Weinberger, president of the associated Bavarian Jewish communities; Sam Haber, American JDC director for Germany and Austria; Jerry Kolieb, British director for HIAS in Germany; Israel Jacobson, American HIAS European director—and I.

For most of the meeting, the issue was the Funkkaserne. Weinberger led the fight against it, assisted by van Dam: the Funkkaserne lacks necessary installations (a school for the children, kitchens, etc.) that are available at Foehrenwald, so why leave the one for the other? Foehrenwald can house families, while the barracks will force three families into one room. Walls and bars shut the Funkkaserne in, a very unfortunate and ominous kind of installation in which to put Jews. Parts of the barracks are already occupied by Letts, Poles, and other DP's, most of whom were used in Nazi times as SS auxiliaries—it is inhumane to ask Jews to live with such people.

To this, von Schmoller, the chief Foreign Office spokesman, politely but firmly replied that the Funkkaserne was in the Geneva agreement—let us limit ourselves, gentlemen, to practical ways of putting that instrument into effect. The Bavarians brought out blueprints to show

how the barracks could already take 60 families (there are 150 families and 200 singles) and be quickly remodeled to accommodate the rest at the opposite end of the camp from non-Jewish inmates. At one point Weinberger—significantly, as it turned out—noted that it would really be unfortunate to forget humanitarian considerations, in view of the “broad political aspects” of the problem—meaning what world opinion would think of Bonn. Suddenly, after about two hours of this, the Germans suggested a recess.

When we reconvened, von Schmoller, to our great surprise, said let's not move the refugees just now; it's too close to the High Holidays; we'll have another meeting afterward and take a fresh look. In other words, a mysterious and complete reversal of the previous German position. Why? One of the Americans told me later he thought Weinberger's reference to world opinion had done it. Another explanation was that the Germans put up a big fight for the Funkkaserne just as a bargaining tactic, intending all along to make this large “concession” and thus impel the Jewish organizations to counter this generosity by greater efforts than ever for total emigration.

Unhappily, I gather, the trouble is not that emigration efforts are lagging, but that visas to the United States and other receiving countries are so hard to get. This is the real problem and without a solution for it the returnee crisis is likely to wax rather than wane.

FRANKFORT, September 5: Tonight, election Eve, was the first time I heard a remark with anti-Semitic overtones. It came from a leftist group, the Gesamte Deutsche Volkspartei, a minor faction somewhere between the Socialists and Communists—and from a clergyman, Pfarrer Mochalski, adjutant to Pastor Niemoller. This outfit, which drew a small crowd this evening to a “theater in the round” where circuses ordinarily perform, uses slogans like “Germany for the Germans!” The speeches all urged Bonn to negotiate with the Russians, the audience not to die to save GI's. Loudest applause came when Mochalski cried: “Yes, we are grateful to America for the help which came during 1945-48, when Germany was prostrate and hungry. But not to the American government! It was American Christians, the American churches which saved us, while Washington was supporting the Morgenthau Plan for Germany's annihilation!”

The future of most of German Jewry may be anticipated in microcosm here in Frankfurt. Before Hitler, the State of Hesse had some 300 Jewish communities. At liberation there were sixteen. It takes at least ten Jews in a town—a *minyan*—to make a formal *Gemeinde*. Today, instead of sixteen communities, ten remain. And more will disappear as the years pass.

There are about 1,000 Jews in Frankfurt, 700 to 800 in the rest of Hesse. A fair number to build with, one might think. But the age spread is deadly. Only six children were left when the Nazis finished with the Jews. As in most other places where German Jews predominate, the majority are old, on the way out, leaving nobody behind. The reason chiefly is that so many were at Theresienstadt, the Nazis' model camp where—unlike the other extermination *Lager*—it was the old who survived and the young who died.

And the few new children who get born? More often than not they spring from mixed marriages, and are not likely to be reared as Jews. Community leaders predict that organized Jewry can escape extinction in Hesse only by a new influx of refugees from Eastern Europe or by the return of German Jews from overseas. The first possibility is shrouded in a thousand political uncertainties; the second is extremely remote, nearly all who might be expected to return—for reasons of compensation claims, property restitution, inability to settle down abroad, or simple fatigue—having already come "home."

So I find no one here who shares the view of Editor Marx in Düsseldorf. On the other hand, only a few of those who returned, or survived the death camps, or emerged from the cellars and walled-up rooms of Nazi cities, are leaving Germany. Many thought they might go after settling their restitution claims. There is now a uniform indemnification law for the whole Bonn Republic. But sizeable sums cannot be taken from the country. Pensions may be sent abroad only up to 300 marks (around \$74) a month. The rest is frozen. The older people are too tired or broken to pull up stakes. The younger—if they have established a business, a professional niche, or some other means of livelihood, and most of them have—don't want to risk the unknown outside.

They sometimes stop and think about the unknown within, of course. But fatalism seems to push the fear away. Jewish influence on de-

velopments in Germany has been wiped out, they say; we are powerless to affect events, helpless before forces beyond our control; and is it really safer anywhere else in this hate-filled world?

Meanwhile life goes on—with nobody looking beyond the next five years or ten.

I HOPE someone will come along soon to dig deeply into the story of Joseph Klibansky, who has just been sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment and a \$4,500 fine after conviction on charges of being "accessory" to violations of corporation law and foreign-exchange controls on the part of the former so-called "Jewish Restitution Bank," of which he was legal counsel. The trial lasted ten months and 125 witnesses were heard. But a careful check may demonstrate—as I, on the basis of admittedly superficial inspection, think it will—that Klibansky is a brilliant, sincere Jew who is being dragged down by the vengefulness of ex-Nazis and the false shame of apathetic fellow Jews. If so, this will be a matter for world outcry. It may be another Auerbach Case—only worse, because this time there is at least the Auerbach precedent, with all the hideous doubts which followed Auerbach's suicide.

Nearly everyone agrees that the sentence is excessive, even if Klibansky is guilty. Nearly everyone agrees, too, that he showed bad judgment—at the very least—in associating closely with a private bank that had shady promoters, adopted a misleading name, and facilitated the transfer abroad (allegedly at a considerable discount) of blocked funds received as compensation by victims of Nazism. Otherwise there is wide divergence about the facts. In his native Frankfurt, Klibansky is regarded by Jews with admiration bordering on awe. Elsewhere, I have heard even responsible Jewish leaders speak of him uneasily as an "adventurer." The man clearly has a controversial reputation. But he is also undeniably the most eloquent trial lawyer in Germany today, a master of judicial procedure, the terror of inept opponents and prejudiced benches, with an incredibly high record of triumphant Supreme Court appeals in reversal of lower-court decisions. Even his strongest detractors are convinced that the proceedings against him were motivated by professional jealousy and the vindictiveness of judges. He has left a loophole, they say, and his enemies have poured through it. Also, it is intimated, the chase is spurred by Klibansky's

self-assertive but fearless defense of Jews and Jewishness. He is active in Jewish causes, he is the only lawyer in Germany who refuses to transact business on the Sabbath, and he has been known to put on a *yarmelke* in public places. Some Jews complain that he goes too far and positively "flaunts" his Jewishness in German faces. I cannot blink away as irrelevant the fact that the prosecuting attorney in the Klibansky case was also prosecuting Jews between 1933 and 1939 for the "crime" of trying to get their possessions out of Hitler's Reich, and that the chief judge of the court which convicted Klibansky was jailed as a Nazi by the occupation authorities, then "de-Nazi-fied," but as recently as 1951 was distinguishing himself by virulent, jingoistic declarations from the bench.

I ALSO cannot shrug off the impression Klibansky made on me during a two-hour interview in his offices. Here was a man against whom action for disbarment may soon be started by the *Avokatenkammer*, and who sometime in 1954 will present his appeal before the Supreme Court against a verdict which means prison and ruin. Yet not once did he speak of his private problem—only of the Jewish community in Germany, its relations with other Jewries, the need for vigilance against neo-Nazi termites who, he says, infest the whole structure of German "democracy." All this he expressed in a fluent French, accented but eloquent, which he acquired while an inmate of a Vichy internment camp. Curiously, Klibansky in physical appearance is almost a caricature of the comic-page German whom he despises: bald head, a neck encased in fat, beer-barrel belly. His friends tell me he has a bad heart, bad kidneys, diabetes. They say the anguish and exertion he is now undergoing may kill him even if he wins his case. During our talk he kept gulping down pills and medicines. Certainly not a prepossessing person physically. But when he began to speak, even in a language foreign to him, he was transformed. I came away more than half persuaded that Klibansky has qualities of greatness. If so, it is clear why smaller men should misunderstand him and his enemies should unite to bring him down.

There is more involved here than the fate of one man. Because of the peculiarly Jewish context of this affair, Klibansky's treatment affects Jewry's position in Germany and is therefore a matter of concern to Jews everywhere.

O. M., of the liberal *Frankfurter Rundschau*, nodded his head wearily when I said his newspaper ought to hammer away at things like the ex-Nazi color of the German magistracy. "We do," he said, "but how long can we go on writing about it? Nobody seems to mind. You lose readers every time you write about Nazis. There's another trouble: what would you replace the Nazis with? I remember one case where the JDC unofficially protested at the appointment of a Nazi as schoolteacher. The authorities said they'd put in any competent substitute if he could be produced. Well, nobody was available with the proper credentials who had *not* been a party man."

THE election results have caused satisfaction among Frankfort Jews. This despite the fact that many lean toward the Social Democrats, who were defeated. "The one bad thing about the Adenauer victory," I was informed, "is that it means Germany will have an army. From your American viewpoint this is good for NATO and bad for the Russians. Maybe so. We remember enough history to be unhappy about a remilitarized Germany. In the long run it has always strengthened the right wing—and from right wing to anti-Semitism isn't far around here." Others were troubled by the setback to the Socialists because they were the party that voted solidly for the Israel reparations pact; the victorious coalition contained waverers and opponents. "Also, it's not too good to have one man—even if he's Adenauer—so dominant in a country like this."

Against these reservations, however, has to be reckoned the genuine relief, and even surprise, over the abysmal showing of the extremist groups. The prevailing mood, for the present, is that a country which can vote as soberly as Germany did last Sunday is not too bad a risk.

BERLIN, September 9: Rosh Hashanah at the Pestalozzi-strasse Temple. The *Gemeinde* here not yet having a resident rabbi, the JDC has brought over Dr. Hermann Schreiber (formerly of Potsdam) from a synagogue in London to officiate during the High Holidays. The JDC also printed 2,000 handsome prayerbooks to replace those destroyed by the Nazis, and helped finance the restoration of the damaged interior. Tonight was the dedicatory service, the first since the repairs. It is a little synagogue, but a jewel.

The place was packed. All seats had been reserved weeks ago. The *Gemeinde* president, Heinz Galinski, installed a chair for me at the near end of the women's gallery, where I was only slightly less conspicuous than three Jewish GI's from our Berlin garrison sitting in a back row with overseas caps perked on their heads. With the prayers, there was some fine singing by a young cantor, a mixed choir helping robustly from a concealed alcove above and behind the tabernacle. Then a few speeches of dedication: Galinski spoke movingly of the reborn community's future. An elder of the community, who had served as lay *Prädiger* when there was no rabbi, gave a warm address of welcome to Dr. Schreiber. The *gabbe*, as *gabbes* must, also spoke a few words, reading with dignity from a piece of paper. Then the rabbi arose to deliver his sermon.

I missed the Hebrew of his text, but the German was "*Bisher hat uns Gott geholfen*" running like a refrain as he catalogued the disasters which have befallen Jewry, after each disaster salvation coming or at least something to be thankful for, each time proving that "until now hath the Almighty aided us." I could not suppress the perhaps irreverent thought that this, of all congregations, should hardly be expected to admit such an interpretation of the years 1933-45.

But it was the congregation itself which, for me, made this night so memorable. The last-ditch survivors of a great multitude, of the 200,000 Jews in Hitler's Berlin. Each of them surely carrying a past heavy with anguish. Yet there they were, so real, so decorous, so very much themselves again, the women tastefully dressed, with a certain flair, the men, young and old, in neat dark suits and homburgs, looking so strangely familiar, until it occurred to me that of course, this is how they were looking tonight in the Emanu-El or Rodeph Sholoms of America too. These were the same people, except for the accident of geography. They were tranquil, I suppose, because the nightmare and the miracle were an old and submerged memory to them, but on me the impact of their physical reality was so poignant that a lump came into my throat.

Later, with a young Berliner who had escaped to Shanghai before the war, I went to dine on the Kurfürstendamm. We chose the Café Wien, which has lately been restored to its Jewish proprietors. Just as we came in the orchestra burst out with "*Eli, Eli.*"

SPENT three hours in Soviet Berlin today, inspecting flats in the huge block of new "workers' apartments" on Stalinallee (scene of the June uprisings), chatting with salespeople in bookstores and shops, eating a "people's lunch" in a cooperative, and noticing that the big posters and billboards no longer aggressively attack Wall Street, as they did the last time I was here, but defensively insist that East Germans are unflaggingly loyal to Pieck and Grotewohl.

I made no attempt to seek out Jews in the Eastern sector. It might have embarrassed somebody, though I understand secondhand that the three present leaders of the *Gemeinde* are party stalwarts (named Rothman, Heilbronn, Bendit) beyond embarrassment. When the real leaders panicked after the Prague trial and fled to West Berlin, the Communists installed this "trustworthy" triumvirate, which has reportedly turned the community into an administrative branch of the regime. Each of the three carefully watches the others, and nothing is decided without consent from HQ. To be on the safe side, even the community mail is taken to party offices to be opened. Welfare applicants are told that the party, not the *Gemeinde*, assures the welfare of the people. It seems clear, however, that there is no active anti-Semitism. Old people's and children's homes near Pankow are operating unmolested. Only last Saturday the big synagogue on Rykestrasse was reopened after repairs whose cost the East German government helped defray.

Weissensee, the largest Jewish cemetery in Europe, is in the Eastern sector. West Berlin Jews are not allowed to visit it. This arbitrary division of the two groups, unified until last January, is causing deep concern on the Western side. During the Great Fear about 600 came over. A *Flüchtlingsheim* was maintained for them until July. About 20 went to Israel, 325 were resettled in West Germany with JDC help, and housing in West Berlin was obtained for the rest, who receive a regular monthly stipend from the municipal government as political refugees, and have been more or less reintegrated. But nearly 2,000 still remain in East Berlin, and West Berlin Jewry has set up its own channels to keep them from total isolation. They use the Jewish hospital here. Forty of the 130 children who attended the JDC-sponsored summer camp at Wannsee were from the East. A *shochet* goes periodically into the

Eastern sector. The people over there have been advised that they can get extra food and assistance from the *Gemeinde* here, and they come over when they can—it's something like the American food-package program.

IN WEST BERLIN the Jews have a functioning *Gemeinde*, no doubt of it. Five synagogues, from Liberal to Hasidic, four religious schools, a "Center" program of youth groups, discussion groups, lectures, a full array of communal welfare institutions.

Their chief concern is to instill a knowledge of Judaism in the new generation, to keep the *Gemeinde* truly Jewish, safe from the falling away which comes through lack of teaching. "We are desperately in need of rabbis," says Galinski. Hadn't a few foreign rabbis been sent in? "Yes, there was a Liberal one, from Cincinnati, but he was more interested in politics than in the synagogue, and we were glad to see him go. And there was an Orthodox one too, but he—the less said about him the better. Now we have Dr. Schneider, and also Dr. Broch from England for the Orthodox services, but they are staying only through the Holidays. Look, don't think us ungrateful. We've had wonderful help from America. But what good will it be in the end if our children are allowed to forget their identity? So we must go an appealing: Send us teachers. Send us food for the spirit."

JUST back from an hour's visit with Jeannette Wolf, Socialist delegate from Berlin to the Bonn parliament. Frau Wolf also has a hand in activities of the *Gemeinde* Women's Branch. Aged about sixty, I'd say, but with more endurance than I. Her conversation was a harangue, and I came away exhausted. She translated each of my questions about Jewish matters into politics, and off she would go denouncing the government coalition and lauding her own party. Adenauer's bloc had been split on the Israel treaty, but the Socialists, "my party," she said proudly, voted for it 100 per cent. "Why, two of our members who were sick were carried from their beds and came to record their ballots." Then, as if to prove her case to the hilt: "Our Socialist caucus ruled that any deputy who did not attend and vote would be fined 20 marks."

If the government parties were so bad, I inquired, wouldn't she recommend that all the Jews leave Germany? Oh no, she cried, there

is no danger here, because our Socialist movement is strong; the stronger it grows, the safer Jews will be. But, I persisted, why take the risk? Because, she said, the Jews are good frontline fighters for democracy, and we need them.

I much prefer the attitude of men like Galinski in Berlin, or Klibansky in Frankfurt. They differ in their estimate of the anti-Semitic threat: Klibansky sees it coiling like a snake; Galinski thinks that Germany, having tried it once with such frightful consequences to herself as well as to the Jews, is the least likely country in the world to try again. But they both are convinced that the democratic struggle is an obligation upon Jews no less than upon other men, and *that* is why they want Jews and a Jewish community to stick it out here. "There is no place in the world to hide any more," says Galinski.

THIS is the moment to note the resentment many Jews here feel about organized Zionism's attitude. After the war, the leaders of the World Zionist Organization in effect tried to legislate German Jewry out of existence by prohibiting all official Zionist activity here, representation at international Zionist meetings through sale of *shekels*, etc. "This," it has been dryly pointed out to me, "did not stop Israel from taking up collections among us for Haganah, Youth Aliyah, Keren Kayemeth, and other drives. Our cash was kosher, but not our souls." Of course, it had been supposed that exodus was going to make Germany totally barren of Jews and that none would ever return. But the Zionist decision did imply a moral judgment: that any Jew who might show the bad taste to remain must be regarded as a pariah or Quisling.

I understand that now, finally, the Zionist executive is going to catch up with history and revise its stand. But the Jews here deeply resent the withholding of the moral support they felt they deserved from Israel in their own difficult position. Not important, but characteristic, they say, was the tendency of Israeli agencies to make commercial contracts in Germany even with ex-Nazi firms rather than with Jewish companies.

MUNICH (mid-September): As I suspected, the various sides of the dispute between German Jewry and the JRSO all seem to have a bit of right and a bit of wrong.

A basic difficulty was that JRSO got started too soon, in the DP era when few could have dreamed that in 1953 there would be dozens of functioning Jewish communities in post-Nazi Germany with large and legitimate communal needs. This mistake was not made in the British Zone. There the Jewish Trust Corporation waited until things settled down enough to indicate that Jews were going to be around in Germany for a long time. So, unlike JRSO, the organized communities of the British-controlled area were given a satisfactory representation on the Corporation, and priority for their claims on funds arising from disposal of heirless property, communal holdings, and other unclaimed assets.

It also seems true, as van Dam angrily told me in Düsseldorf, that some of the JRSO people have been somewhat less than tactful. I have read one or two official JRSO communications that betrayed the arrogant tone of that certain genus of "Jewish professional" one occasionally meets in America too—his original habitat, in fact. An unfortunate tendency can be noted in JRSO to dismiss the local leadership as a "damned nuisance."

On the other hand, there is reason to believe that some spokesmen for German Jewry also have a trace of the careerist about them. They are not entirely indifferent to the opportunities for empire-building when one can lay hold of enough money to finance beautiful budgets. The German court decisions against JRSO in the Augsburg case can give ambitious local leaders a golden occasion if the U. S. Court of Restitution Appeals sitting in Germany rejects the JRSO appeal, as many think it may.

The enlistment of a high-level arbiter whom the *Gemeinden* will trust, and then some earnest consultations under statesmanlike auspices, ought to be a prime order of current business for the international Jewish organizations involved.

All this apart, I must admit some perplexity over the fact that the Jewish Agency, which is after all really an extension of Israel, is slated for exceedingly substantial chunks of JRSO money, and even of the funds eventually to be paid by Germany under the agreement with the Conference for Material Claims. In the case of the latter payments, I had thought they were to be for the benefit of Jewish victims of Hitlerism residing *outside* Israel—the specifically Israeli claim having been presumably met by the separate German reparations agreement

with Israel. The Agency undoubtedly can produce an argument, if pressed, to make it all seem reasonable and for the greatest good of the greatest number. But if there are ex-German Jews in London, for example, who are old and broken and in need of assistance, it does seem a bit difficult to understand why something like Jewish Agency expenses in Germany should have priority on the proceeds from the liquidation of German Jewish claims against the present German government.

ATTEENDED a ceremony rededicating the mass grave of forty Jews who perished in the "Death March" of April 1945, when the SS emptied the concentration camps on the eve of Nazi defeat and tried to destroy the "evidence" by herding them in a pitiless procession toward the Tyrol. The grave is outside Wolfratshausen, and has been tidied up and improved by the inmates of nearby Föhrenwald. In fact, the whole project was conceived and voluntarily executed by the Föhrenwald people, and they formed the bulk of the mourners today. Dignitaries of the Munich *Gemeinde*, the Bavarian government, JDC, HIAS, the German Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, a non-sectarian "Freiheit und Recht" association, and others, lined up on three sides of the large, rectangular plot dominated by a black memorial stone inscribed in German and Hebrew, and bulwarked today with wreaths. The speeches were what might have been expected, tributes to the dead and pledges that their deaths would not be in vain. The representative of the Bavarian Ministry for Refugees apologized for his Ministry's failure to have previously known of the grave's existence (the Föhrenwalders discovered it), and he announced that its upkeep would henceforth be a solemn governmental charge. A small disturbance was caused by the spokesman for a Socialist faction in Föhrenwald. His oration, just before the *kaddish*, was delivered with uncovered head, to the visible shock and indignation of the Orthodox bystanders. Even the Wolfratshausen mayor, a peasant-politician type, wore a hat. In his speech, the mayor had seemed to be trying only to absolve himself of all responsibility for the martyrdom of the forty. "We were helpless to interfere," he pleaded. "And as soon as the killers passed, we hurried reverently to bury the dead." "In d'rerd zol er ligen," muttered a little Föhrenwalder behind me. "The only reason they

buried them was because they were afraid of an epidemic."

I SEE now why Foehrenwald attracts returnees from Israel, and why both the German authorities and the Jewish organizations want to close it down. It is not exactly a country club, this last existing Jewish DP camp in Germany, but it isn't a conglomeration of tin shacks in an Israeli *ma'abara* either. There are over 2,000 inmates, yet the place doesn't seem crowded. Something like a German village in the Balkans, with neatly laid streets and sturdy little stone houses. There are cafés, food stores, workshops, all operated by residents. A German civilian official administers the camp, and there is a nominal German police supervision at the entrance—but no suggestion of coercion. The busiest centers are the various offices of JDC for emigration and welfare. HIAS has its own separate bureau on the grounds and its own clients.

There are two major factions, and I talked at length with both. Adherents of one are known as the *vatikim*, the other as *chosrim*. The *vatikim* are the "Old Ones," the hard-core cases, the long-term residents who can't get visas to anywhere, and a few people who came back from Israel ahead of the big influx and managed to become "legal" because nobody foresaw what was to follow. Between the "Old Ones" and the *chosrim*—the "Ones Who Returned"—there is implacable hatred. A committee of the *vatikim* told me that until the *chosrim* started pouring in, Foehrenwald was fully recognized by the Bavarian government as entitled to maximum consideration; all kinds of plans were being discussed to resettle the inmates at German and JDC expenses either abroad or elsewhere in Germany; now these plans and the privileged status of the "Old Ones" have been jeopardized. Another grievance of the *vatikim* is aimed at world Jewry. "We are the tuberculars, the crippled, the worst *karbunim* of the Nazis, yet we and our sacrifices have been passed over."

The returnees, who have been taking quite a beating in the Hebrew and Yiddish press lately as despicable deserters from Israel, are understandably not very friendly toward world Jewry at this juncture either. I interviewed a committee of three *chosrim*, and each had a typical justification for having left Israel and come to Germany. The first said he had believed the Zionist propaganda, gone to Israel

with his own funds, exhausted them trying to get started in a new life, and given up only after becoming convinced it was hopeless. The second said he had served two years in the Israeli army and come out to find that he could not get work in his specialized craft as pocket-book maker because the government was not importing leather for anything but shoes. When his wife sickened in their *ma'abara*, he decided it was time to go. The last and oldest of the three—and the only ex-German Jew among them—said he did have a job, and some sort of permanent housing, but five years of the cruel Israeli climate were more than he could bear and he had finally fled because he knew for certain that otherwise his years would be shortened. All three complained bitterly about the *vatikim*, who revile the *chosrim* (and occasionally get beaten up by the latter in exchange). The "Old Ones," say the returnees, talk about desertion from Israel, but what about *them*? Why don't *they* have a try at it? (This is a point: I asked the *vatikim* committee why their people didn't go to Israel, and they all replied in horror that conditions over there were frightful, why should they leave Foehrenwald for something worse, wasn't it their due to be sent to America or Canada or some other decent country where they could live in tranquillity after all their suffering?) The *chosrim* are also darkly incensed against the JDC, which has declined to give them equal subsidy with the old-timers, and in fact began by trying to ignore them entirely. "Are we less Jews than they?" they wanted me to explain. "When our children are hungry, is it a hunger different from other people's hunger? Is it a crime to ask only for a chance to live?"

I AM afraid I don't have the answer, and neither does genial little Sam Haber, the head JDC man here, or his executive staff, all of whom have been very hospitable—and patient with my incessant questioning—despite their own considerable burdens. It is undeniable that some of the *chosrim* are just spongers or worse. But it is also undeniable that not everybody is necessarily worthless if he finds himself unable to adjust to the conditions confronting newcomers in Israel. How far do you go to avoid encouraging departures from Israel, and at what point does even a chronic good-for-nothing adventurer become just another Jew who needs assistance? The JDC has been forced by the sheer weight of the problem

slowly to reduce its resistance to granting aid.

Yesterday I sat in on a long "negotiating" session between a *chosrim* committee and Haber. This time, he told them, he was willing to give assistance to those who were not yet receiving some JDC help—but only on a case basis, by considering each need individually, which is the only way a welfare organization can and should operate. The returnee representatives as much as said they would not abet any attempt to find out which of their people had hidden funds or jobs. Their nervousness on this point seems to confirm the report that some of the *chosrim*, at least, have violent habits. In the end, both sides yielded. The committee agreed to cooperate, and Haber agreed to allocate a special, one-time Yom Kippur cash grant to everyone not on the relief lists.

The Germans are compromising, too. Today I saw Theodor Oberlaender, Bavarian State Secretary for Refugees. He is the local bigwig in the BHE, a party which has become a force in Federal politics because it is a catch-all group for the masses of Germans driven out of the satellite countries and East Germany.* Oberlaender admitted that his group has many ex-Nazis. "I'm one too," he added disarmingly. (A native of Silesia, he turned up in 1939 as a professor at Prague University.) "Our party is open to all who now see that the only way for Germany is democracy." Concerning the returnees, he said that Bavaria could not go on forever permitting illegal entrants to remain, nor could the German state extend to an increasing number of them the monthly relief stipend it customarily gives legitimate DP's of all faiths and origins. On the other hand, he

*In October, Oberlaender became Bonn Minister for Refugees in the new Adenauer government.

pointed out, no returnee was being deported, "although we would have every international legal right to do so."

He had no comment to make on future policy. "We are abiding by the terms of the September conference in Bonn with the Jewish organizations." (This is not altogether true: nothing yet is being done to clear the police records of returnees who had been arrested, or to give them the right to work until they can emigrate, as agreed.) "We are depending on the Jewish organizations to find the maximum amount of visas. We must wait and see." Which, in view of the slow rate of emigration from Foehrenwald and the continued hard times in Israel, leaves the problem just about where it was when I arrived a month ago.†

SALZBURG, Austria, late September: My last afternoon in Germany I went on pilgrimage to Dachau. One American sergeant and his *Fraülein*, and two German families spending Sunday in the country, were the only other visitors. I saw the gas vents in the "shower room" and the huge ovens in the crematory and the tree from which the noose had hung and the wall where the firing squads took aim and the trough where the blood ran and the mass graves for the bones. Everything is carefully labeled. Arrows tell you exactly where to begin your tour and in which direction to progress. It is easier to see everything than to imagine how it must have been. . . .

†A dispatch from Munich early in November reported the arrest in one day of 67 illegal returnees from Israel who, after a court hearing, were being jailed, and subsequently would be expelled from the country, the authorities said. The returnees pleaded they could not adapt themselves to conditions in Israel and had come back to try to emigrate to North or South America.—ED.